(3).—Regulation of Grazing and Protection from Cattle.

68. No change has been made in the grazing rules sanctioned by Government in their Resolution No. 3595, dated 23rd May 1890. Owing to the dearth of grass after the rainy season, 1896, considerable areas of closed forest had to be opened to free grazing throughout the Deccan districts; and the following table shows the areas closed and open to grazing in the several divisions of the Central Circle, as compared with those of the year preceding :—

No.	Division.	1895-96.			1896-97.		
		Closed.	Open.	Total.	Closed.	Open.	Total.
		Sq. Miles.	Sq. Miles	Sq. Miles.	Sq. Miles.	Sq. Miles.	Sq. Miles
1	East Khándesh	72	739	811	53	758	811
2	West Khándesh	363	1,372	1,735	69	1,670	1,739
3	Násik	553	726	1,279	254	1,025	1,279
4	Ahmednagar	294	554	848	47	801	848
5	Poona	236	475	711	40	671	711
6	Sátára	130	558	688	103	595	698
7	Sholápur	137	141	278	135	143	278
	Total ...	1,785	4,565	6,350	701	5,663	6,364

69. Thus it will be perceived that the total area made available for grazing during the year is nearly 1,000 square miles greater than that of the preceding year.

70. The following table shows the number of cattle of different kinds impounded during the year for trespassing in closed forests and for grazing in open forests without permits:—

No.	Division.	Kind of Forest.	Cows and bullocks.	Buffaloes.	Camels.	Horses.	Asses.	Sheep.	Goats.	Total from	
										Closed.	Open.
1	East Khándesh	Closed ...	7,648	1,279	...	66	...	408	30	9,431	...
		Open ...	4,723	636	...	13	...	2,000	900	...	8,272
2	West Khándesh	Closed ...	7,746	1,422	...	267	...	4,217	1,747	15,399	...
		Open ...	2,909	419	...	986	...	3,946	2,037	...	10,297
3	Násik	Closed ...	7,900	1,002	...	124	...	13,632	4,131	26,789	...
		Open ...	7,331	1,370	...	166	3	11,507	8,450	...	28,827
4	Ahmednagar	Closed ...	22,424	1,422	...	356	95	6,929	4,831	36,057	...
		Open ...	8,660	2,627	1	57	46	6,908	4,312	...	22,611
5	Poona	Closed ...	12,573	807	...	150	97	9,750	3,488	26,865	...
		Open ...	4,815	472	...	140	42	7,629	2,513	...	15,611
6	Sátára	Closed ...	6,795	724	...	62	25	5,718	947	14,271	...
		Open ...	4,011	494	...	44	...	6,329	1,186	...	12,064
7	Sholápur	Closed ...	6,563	721	...	94	33	1,609	938	9,958	...
		Open ...	1,125	118	...	12	...	831	1,424	...	3,510
	Total ...	Closed ...	71,649	7,377	...	1,119	250	42,263	16,112	138,770	...
		Open ...	33,574	6,136	1	1,418	91	39,150	20,822	...	101,192
	Grand Total from closed and open	.....	105,223	13,513	1	2,537	341	81,413	36,934	239,962	
	Do. for 1895-96...	.....	148,313	16,293	163	1,835	387	79,303	75,700	321,994	

71. Impoundings from closed forests of the East Khándesh Division and from open forests of the West Khándesh and Násik Divisions are slightly greater in comparison with those of the previous year, but this is almost entirely owing to cattle of wandering graziers from foreign territory having been trespassed; while in the division of Ahmednagar, Poona, Sátára and Sholápur impoundings from "closed" as well as from "open" areas have been considerably less; and the total number impounded during the year is 82,032 below the figures of 1895-96. This decrease is owing to the impounding of cattle from open forests having been stopped subsequent to November 1896, seeing that there was no grass for cattle to eat, that the animals were starving and their owners did not in many cases consider it to be worth while to pay pound-fees to release their animals.

72. The following table will show the extent to which cattle impounded for trespassing in closed forests were covered by passes for open forests as

required by paragraph 5 of Government Resolution No. 8265, dated 21st October 1896, Revenue Department:—

No.	Division.	Number of Cattle.
1	East Khándesh	5,017
2	West Khándesh... ...	8,566
3	Násik	7,636
4	Ahmednagar	2,332
5	Poona	...
6	Sátára	...
7	Sholápur	...
	Total ...	23,551

73. To protect the forests from the inroads of cattle, fencing, with barbed wire, with the crown branches of bábul trees armed with sharp thorns, with Euphorbia neriifolia, is resorted to. Towards the close of the year a consignment of 15 linear miles of barbed wire fencing has been received on indent from the Secretary of State for India for each division; and besides there were in stock material for fencing 10 linear miles obtained from England during 1895-96; and in addition to the above some barbed wire for fencing was bought in the Bombay market which was attached to wooden posts from the forests:—

No.	Division.	Wire.	Staples.
		Cwts.	Lbs.
1	West Khándesh ...	100	392
2	Násik	142	580
3	Ahmednagar... ...	....	112
4	Sholápur	4	56
	Total ...	246	1,140

74. The following table exhibits the progress made in fencing and the cost incurred during the year:—

No.	Division.	Length of								Total cost.
		Wire fencing.		Euphorbia neriifolia fencing.		Prickly-pear fencing.		Thorn fencing.		
		Miles.	Yds.	Miles.	Yds.	Miles.	Yds.	Miles.	Yds.	Rs.
1	East Khándesh	22	1,320	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,076
2	West Khándesh	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,274
3	Násik	16	158	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,478
4	Ahmednagar	7	600	..	...	...	...	...	...	2,529
5	Poona	14	1,176	2	962	...	...	14	508	5,696
6	Sátára	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,555
7	Sholápur	9	...	...	...	2	1,540	...	...	3,776
	Total ...	104	1,494	2	962	2	1,540	14	508	26,384

75. Thorn fences were made round the stools of the departmentally felled anjan (Hardwickia binata) trees in the Dhulia and Pimpalner ranges of the West Khándesh Division to protect the very delicate re-shoots of this species from stray cattle and deer. In Ahmednagar Division bábul coupes exploited during the year were fenced round with bábul thorns; and 6,425 aloe bulbs were put along forest boundaries by Forest Guards without any cost being incurred on their account.

(*c*).—Improvement of Forest Growth.

(*1*).—*Natural Reproduction.*

76. Owing to the peculiarly unfavourable character of the monsoon rainfall with heavy deluges at the commencement followed by a lengthened break,